



NEWS RELEASE

PRESS OFFICE

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ORGANIZATIONS PICKED TO HELP SMALL BUSINESSES ELIMINATE WORKPLACE DRUG AND ALCOHOL ABUSE

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Small Business Administration recently awarded \$3.5 million in grants and contracts to help small businesses implement drug-free workplace programs. The grants will go to 21 SBA Small Business Development Centers and private organizations, such as drug-testing firms and employee assistance programs.

“Recent studies put the cost to American society of drug and alcohol abuse at \$276 billion,” said Hector V. Barreto, administrator of the SBA. **“Small business owners bear a substantial amount of that loss, which doesn’t include the human cost to the families of those suffering from drug and alcohol abuse.”**

Congress approved the Drug-Free Workplace Act in 1998, putting the SBA in charge of the Drug-Free Workplace Program. The SBA, in cooperation with the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy, the Department of Health and Human Services, and the Department of Labor, administers the program.

Small business owners receive financial and technical assistance in preparing and implementing written drug-free workplace policies. These typically include provisions for employee drug and alcohol abuse training programs, workplace drug testing programs and employee assistance programs.

“Most large businesses have drug-free workplace policies and programs to cope with employees who abuse drugs and alcohol. But small businesses have fewer resources and staff to implement such programs,” Barreto said. **“With the help of the SBA, more than 2,000 small businesses have implemented full or partial drug-free workplace programs.”**

Congress approved funding for this second round of grants and contract awards late last year, renaming the legislation the Paul D. Coverdell Drug-Free Workplace Program. The late Sen. Coverdell, R-Ga., co-authored the legislation.

“This new round of funding will extend the assistance available to help small businesses reduce and eliminate the drug- and alcohol-related problems of absenteeism, workplace accidents, disciplinary actions, stolen inventory and lost productivity,” Barreto said. **“These are serious problems that no small business can afford to ignore.”**

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The organizations and Small Business Development Centers receiving funding are listed below. For more information on the SBA's drug-free workplace program, go to www.sba.gov/news/drugfree.

Intermediaries receiving grants to provide financial and technical assistance to small businesses for establishing drug-free workplace programs:

a'TEST Consultants, North Little Rock, Ark. 501-376-9776

Bay Health Medical Group, Essexville, Mich. 517-895-2251

Council on Alcoholism & Drug Abuse of Northwest Louisiana, Shreveport, La. 318-222-8511

Drug-Free America Foundation, St. Petersburg, Fla. 727-893-2616

Drug Free Business Houston, Houston, Texas 713-942-4100 X336

Drugs Don't Work in Arizona, Phoenix, Ariz. 602-248-8453

Florida Drug Screening, Inc., Palm Bay, Fla. 321-728-2941

Lowell Medical Center/Arkansas Occupational Health, Lowell, Ark. 501-770-1125

National Drug & Alcohol Testing, Pinellas Park, Fla. 727-547-1116

Occupational Safety Systems, Inc., Corpus Christi, Texas 888-980-8650

Trident National, Richmond, Va. 804-354-0697

The Walsh Group, Bethesda, Md. (program in Florida) 301-571-9494

Workers Assistance Program, Austin, Texas 512-

328-1144. *For more information on all of SBA's programs for small businesses, call the SBA Answer Desk at 1 800 U ASK SBA, or visit the SBA's extensive Web site at www.sba.gov.*

SBA SBDCs receiving contracts to provide information and assistance to small businesses for establishing drug-free workplace programs:

Arkansas SBDC, Little Rock, Ark. 501-324-9043

Georgia SBDC, Athens, Ga. 706-542-5266

Idaho SBDC, Boise, Idaho 208-426-3799

New York SBDC, Albany, N.Y. 518-443-5398

North Texas SBDC, Dallas, Texas 214-860-5835

Rhode Island SBDC, Smithfield, R.I. 401-232-6352

South Texas-Border SBDC, San Antonio, Texas 210-458-2472

Wisconsin SBDC, Madison, Wis. 608-263-7794